



PORTS
Parks Online Resources for Teachers and Students
Distance Learning with California State Parks



Talkin' Trash –The Anti-Debris Act

Unit Profile

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Subject – Multiple perspectives on the issue of hydraulic mining in the 1880s and its environmental and sociological effects, with comparisons to modern day issues.

Grade Level – 8th Grade

Time required – 12 class periods of 60-90 min. each

General Description – This unit focuses on how an idea becomes a law, using the Federal Anti-Debris Act of 1882 as a starting point for viewing the relationships between local, state, and federal legislation. Students examine, analyze, and take a stand on the Anti-Debris Act.

Using on-line, on-demand materials provided by state parks, students become familiar with hydraulic mining and its effects during the 19th century. The students receive background on the environmental, political, and social issues surrounding this topic and the resulting federal Anti-Debris Act of 1882. Students learn how the legislative process is used to solve problems and the roles of the various levels (federal, state and local) of government.

Students assume the role of newspaper reporters for their first video conference with park staff. Park employees are in character and costume, portraying people that lived in California during the 1880's and were familiar with the hydraulic mining controversy. The "reporters" interview these characters so that they can write their articles during subsequent lessons.

After writing their articles, in-class lessons direct the student's attention to modern issues in their local community. Students focus on how legislation may be able to affect issues that they find important. The students then participate in a second video conference that allows them to take a "tour" of the State Capitol as they follow the path of a bill from its inception in a committee room to its signing in the Governor's Office.

Further in-class lessons focus the student's attention on questions they have concerning the state legislative process and areas that they would like to see addressed by the state legislature. In the third video conference (if scheduling with legislators is possible) legislators from the school's district video conference with the students. The legislator has a chance to respond to the student's questions and inform them about the legislative process.

California State Standards

History-Social Science, Grade 8

United States History and Geography: Growth and Conflict

8.3 Students understand the foundation of the American political system and the ways in which citizens participate in it.

8.3.7 Understand the functions and responsibilities of a free press

8.6 Students analyze the divergent paths of the American people from 1800 to the mid-1800s and the challenges they faced, with emphasis on the Northeast

English Language Arts, Grade 8

- ***WRITING***

1.0. WRITING STRATEGIES:

Organization and Focus

1.3 Support theses or conclusions with analogies, paraphrases, quotations, opinion from authorities, comparisons, and similar devices.

Research and Technology

1.4 Plan and conduct multiple step information searches by using computer networks and modems.

1.5 Achieve an effective balance between researched information and original ideas.

2.0 WRITING APPLICATIONS (GENRES AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS):

2.3 Write research reports

2.4 Write persuasive compositions

- **LISTENING AND SPEAKING**

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1.0 LISTENING AND SPEAKING STRATEGIES

1.2 Paraphrase a speaker's purpose and point of view and ask relevant questions concerning the speaker's content, delivery, and purpose.

1.8 Evaluate the credibility of a speaker (e.g., hidden agendas, slanted or biased material).

1.9 Interpret and evaluate the various ways in which visual image makers (e.g., graphic artists, illustrators, news photographers) communicate information and affect impressions and opinions.

2.0 SPEAKING APPLICATION (Genres and Their Characteristics)

2.3 Deliver research presentations.

2.4 Deliver persuasive presentations.

Lesson One

Objective – Students will use primary sources, such as newspaper articles and photographs, to write news articles that accurately represent prevalent viewpoints from the 1880’s on hydraulic mining in California. Working in teams, they will then compile their individual articles into a 1880’s pro-miner or pro-farmer newspaper. In addition to incorporating quotes from actual newspaper articles housed at the State Capitol and now available as an online resource, students will also include accounts from “living” historical characters they meet during their first videoconference from the classroom to the State Capitol.

This first conference will allow the students to become familiar with the process of videoconferencing and to meet the park interpreters who will be working with them throughout the Talkin’ Trash unit. Park Interpreters portraying “living” historical characters will interact with students to share both the farmer and the miner side of the Debris issue.

California State Standards-Social Studies - 8.3, 8.3.7; 8.6

California State Standards – Language Arts: Writing Strategies 1.0, 2.0; Listening and Speaking 1.0, 2.0

Materials:

- Print Resources:

- *Harvesting the Hills – Hydraulic Mining and the Quest for Gold* – Pamphlet available upon request from California State Parks (800) 777-0369.
- *Hydraulic gold-Mining in California 1882* by Taliesin Evans. Booklet available upon request from California State Parks (800) 777-0369.

- Online Resources

- California State Parks Digitized Collection:
 - Anti-Debris Act News Articles - <http://www.egusd.k12.ca.us/ports/>
 - Anti-Debris Act Photo and Image Gallery - <http://www.egusd.k12.ca.us/ports/gallery.htm>
- Summary of Anti-Debris Act
 - [Sacramento Bee Account](http://classic.sacbee.com/ourtown/discover/goldcountry/goldrun.html) - <http://classic.sacbee.com/ourtown/discover/goldcountry/goldrun.html>
- Timeline of Debris Events
 - [Hydraulic Mining in Nevada County](http://www.ncgold.com/goldrushtown/hydraulic.html) - <http://www.ncgold.com/goldrushtown/hydraulic.html>
- Primary Source Images
 - [Gallery of California Mining Images](http://www.glittering.com/gallery/index.html) - <http://www.glittering.com/gallery/index.html>
 - [California as We Saw It](http://www.library.ca.gov/goldrush/) - <http://www.library.ca.gov/goldrush/>
- Primary Source Documents
 - [Letters from the Gold Fields](http://www.glittering.com/gallery/index.html) - <http://www.glittering.com/gallery/index.html>
- Tour (and Review) of the Gold Rush
 - [Experience the Gold Rush](http://www.museumca.org/goldrush/shock.html) - <http://www.museumca.org/goldrush/shock.html>

- [The Life of a Miner](http://www.museumca.org/goldrush/fever12.html) - <http://www.museumca.org/goldrush/fever12.html>
 - [All About the Gold Rush](http://cwis.isu.edu/~trinmich/allabout.html) - <http://cwis.isu.edu/~trinmich/allabout.html>
- Glossary of Mining Terminology
 - [Gold Rush Chronicles](http://www.comspark.com/chronicles/glossary-a.shtml) - <http://www.comspark.com/chronicles/glossary-a.shtml>
 - [California Notes](http://www.sfmuseum.org/hist9/turrillgold.html) - <http://www.sfmuseum.org/hist9/turrillgold.html>
 - [Visual Glossary of Mining](http://www.or.blm.gov/roseburg/china_ditch/Pages/glossary.html) - http://www.or.blm.gov/roseburg/china_ditch/Pages/glossary.html
- Hydraulic Mining in California
 - [Evolution of Mining](http://www.calgoldrush.com/graphics/evolution.html) - <http://www.calgoldrush.com/graphics/evolution.html>
 - [Hydraulic Mining and Controversy](http://www.learncalifornia.org/doc.asp?id=525) - <http://www.learncalifornia.org/doc.asp?id=525>
 - [Tour of Hydraulic Mining -Malakoff Diggings](http://www.museumca.org/goldrush/qtvr-malakoff.html) - <http://www.museumca.org/goldrush/qtvr-malakoff.html>
 - [Background on Hydraulic Mining in California](http://cprr.org/Museum/Hydraulic_Mining/hydraulic_mining_1of1.html) - http://cprr.org/Museum/Hydraulic_Mining/hydraulic_mining_1of1.html
 - [Mercury Contamination from Historic Gold Mining](http://ca.water.usgs.gov/mercury/fs06100.html) - <http://ca.water.usgs.gov/mercury/fs06100.html>
- Videos
 - Hydraulic Gold Mining – Distributed by California Department of Parks and Recreation Publications Section. P.O. Box 943896, Sacramento, CA 94294-0001
- Videoconferencing equipment, including T.V. or projection unit with screen

Procedure:

1. As “editor-in-chief,” you will assign your students the role of a reporter working for either a pro-mining or pro-farming 1880’s California newspaper. Their task as reporters is to write a thought-provoking article for a special issue focusing on the Anti-Debris Act, with in-depth examinations of specific people and events that brought about the law, or whose lives were impacted by its enactment.
2. To prepare for their first videoconference, students should generate a list of open-ended interview questions pertinent to the Debris Act and the relevant to the “living” historical characters they will meet during the conference. Park Interpreters will provide instructor with information on the historical characters prior to the conference.
3. Videoconferencing: Students will visit the State Capitol via a videoconference where they will have the opportunity to role play their assignment as reporters from the 1880’s.
4. Students will team in groups of 3-4 to create a multi-page newspaper focusing on the issues and times surrounding the Anti-Debris Act. Each member must contribute at least one. In addition, the newspaper must include several letters to the editor, advertisements (authentic to the time period), at least one graphic per page (e.g., photo, illustration, map, chart, etc.), and a “local” story of their choice (e.g., entertainment, sports, recipes).

Assessment: The individual student articles and group newspapers will be scored using the attached rubrics:

- Scoring Guide for Newspaper Article
- Scoring Guide for Newspaper

Lesson Two

Objective – Students will begin the process of transforming an idea into a bill by drafting a proposal on an issue that directly affects them or their community and presenting it to a local representative. They will present their proposal during a videoconference from their classroom to the State Capitol.

Students will participate in a second, and possibly a third, videoconference to the State Capitol during the course of Lesson Two.

California State Standards - Social Studies: 8.3

California State Standards – Language Arts: Writing Strategies 1.0, 2.0; Listening and Speaking 1.0, 2.0

Materials:

- Print Resources:
 - *The Legislative Process – A Citizens Guide to Participation* – Pamphlet available upon request from Senate Publications, 1020 N Street, B-53, Sacramento, CA 95814, (916) 327-2155
 - **California’s Legislature** – Book available online at <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/califleg.html> or by contacting the Legislative Bill Room at (916) 445-2645.
- Online Resources:
 - Your Legislature Online - <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/yourleg.html>
 - California Bill Information - <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/bilinfo.html>
 - Life Cycle of a Bill - <http://capitolmuseum.ca.gov/english/citizens/lifecycle/index.html>
 - California State Capitol - <http://capitolmuseum.ca.gov/english/citizens/lifecycle/index.html>
 - Online Thesis Builder - <http://online.com/electraguide/thesis.html>
 - Graphic Organizer for a Persuasive Essay - <http://www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/pdf/persuasion.pdf>
 - Process Guide for Developing a Persuasive Argument - <http://projects.edtech.sandi.net/staffdev/tpss99/processguides/persuasive.html>
- Videos
 - How a Bill Becomes a Law – Free upon request through the LegiSchool Project at California State University, Sacramento (www.csus.edu/calst/legischool.htm), (916) 278-6906.
- Videoconferencing equipment, including T.V. or projection unit with screen

Procedure:

Prior to Second Videoconference:

1. Assist students in locating their state legislators along with their current bills in progress. Sites such as www.assembly.ca.gov and www.sen.ca.gov will provide resource materials as well as opportunities to email representatives.
2. Assist students in researching current mining and farming bills (www.leginfo.ca.gov provides a useful search tool and downloadable legislation).
3. Students will select a bill relevant to their community or personal life and follow its progress on route to becoming a bill. The Legislative Bill Room (916-445-2323) provides free current histories of all legislation. Have students share the history and status of their bill.
4. Have students examine issues of local newspapers and magazines as well as radio and television broadcasts to find out what issues are attracting attention and debate.
5. Facilitate a brainstorming session on current issues facing their community. Invite community speakers (e.g., city council members, local newspaper reports, representatives of special interest groups, etc.) to come to the classroom to speak on the issues.

Attend Second Videoconference: Students will interact with Park Interpreters by sharing highlights from their newspapers and learning about the actual outcome of the Anti-Debris Act. Students will then take a virtual tour of the Capitol to learn how and where a bill becomes a law.

Following the Second Videoconference:

6. As an individual, group, or whole class activity, decide on topics that could truly benefit the community if enacted into a law.
7. Assign students to begin the process of writing a persuasive proposal, in letter format, to present their ideas to legislators. Have students begin the writing process with the attached graphic organizer. Refer students to the Online Thesis Builder to help build a logical argument.
8. Provide your students with an authentic audience for their proposals by inviting community leaders to the classroom to participate in a panel discussion or debate; submitting their articles to local newspapers, magazines, and T.V. stations; or arranging for a third videoconference with the State Capitol so that students have the opportunity to meet and dialogue with their assembly member or senator.

Assessment: Persuasive essays and oral presentations will be scored using the attached rubrics:

- Scoring Guide for Writing a Persuasive Essay
- Scoring Guide for an Oral Presentation

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Scoring Guide for Newspaper Article

Exemplary (Exceeds the Standard)

- Article meets all the criteria for Proficient, plus:
- Article contains multiple perspectives on the topic of the Anti-Debris Act
- Article contains quotes from primary sources that show the publisher's point of view
- Article achieves a balance between researched ideas and original ideas
- Article contains strong verbs and nouns

Proficient (Meets the Standard)

- Article is written as a time piece of journalism from the 1800's, from the perspective of a reporter actually reporting it as current news
- Article explains the background (historical context) of the Anti-Debris Act
- All information contained in the article is historically accurate (from the reporter's perspective) and relevant to the topic (Anti-Debris Act)
- Article has catchy, concise headline that accurately describes the content
- Article has a byline
- Article has a beginning, middle, and end
- All graphics have captions that describe the graphic.
- Article answers the questions *who*, *what*, *where*, *why*, *when*, and *with what result*?
- Article has been proofread for spelling, grammar, and punctuation

Progressing (Toward Meeting the Standard)

- Article contains at least six of the criteria for Proficient
- Article needs more work

Not Yet Meeting the Standard

- Article contains less than six of the criteria for Proficient
- Article lacks content and/or focus
- Article needs more work

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Scoring Guide for Newspaper

Exemplary (Exceeds the Standard)

- Newspaper meets all the criteria for **Proficient**, plus:
- Newspaper contains an original political cartoon depicting some aspect of the Anti-Debris Act
- Newspaper achieves a balance between researched ideas and original ideas
- Newspaper is exceptionally detailed
- Newspaper is visually outstanding and well laid out

Proficient (Meets the Standard)

- Newspaper is formatted in a recognizable newspaper format
- Newspaper contains the required items (news article, letters to editor, ads, graphics, local story)
- All items reflect the time period (1800's)
- All items are historically accurate and relevant to the topic (Anti-Debris Act)
- All graphics support the stories
- Newspaper has minimal white space
- Newspaper has been proofread for grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors

Progressing (Toward Meeting the Standard)

- Newspaper contains at least five of the criteria for **Proficient**
- Newspaper needs more work

Not Yet Meeting the Standard

- Newspaper contains less than five of the criteria for **Proficient**
- Newspaper lacks content and/or focus
- Article needs more work

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Scoring Guide for Persuasive Proposal

4 Exemplary

- All criteria for *Proficient* have been met
- Proposal reflects in-depth research
- Information is synthesized with exceptional detail
- Proposal has a compelling opening that makes the reader want to read on
- Proposal has satisfying end that convinces the reader that the writer cares deeply about the topic
- Uses strong verbs and nouns

3 Proficient

- Thesis statement is clearly stated in opening paragraph and is supported by three to five arguments
- Each argument is restated in a well-developed paragraph – or two - with historically accurate, relevant, detailed evidence in support of that argument
- Thesis statement is consistently maintained throughout proposal (all supporting arguments and evidence support the thesis)
- Original thesis is restated in conclusion, along with a final statement about overall importance of thesis
- Proposal is logically organized with a beginning, middle, and end
- Transitions are used to carry the reader from one thought to the next
- Key quotes are incorporated into the proposal
- Has been proofread for errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation

2 Progressing

- Six of the criteria for *Proficient* have been met
- Thesis may be unclear and/or may lack adequate supporting arguments
- May need more evidence to support arguments
- Errors in spelling, grammar, spelling, and/or punctuation may distract from overall effectiveness of essay
- More work is needed

1 Not Yet Meeting the Standard

- Less than six of the criteria for *Proficient* have been met
- Proposal lacks content and focus
- Errors in spelling, grammar, and/or punctuation may make it difficult to read proposal
- Assignment should be redone

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Scoring Guide for Oral Presentation

4 Exemplary

- Criteria in the Proficient category have been met
- Presentation is not only informative but also engaging

3 Proficient

- Presentation is logical and organized
- Presentation has an obvious beginning, middle, and end
- Key information is apparent, and the speakers support conclusions with evidence
- Presentation is appropriate for the audience
- Presentation is delivered fluently, with good volume, pronunciation, and diction
- Eye contact is made frequently and correctly with audience
- Gestures and demeanor are appropriate for material - before, during, and after the presentation
- Nervousness is not distracting (it's normal to be a bit nervous)

2 Progressing

- Six to seven of the Proficient criteria are met
- More work is needed

1 Not Yet Meeting the Standard

- Less than six of the Proficient criteria are met
- Presentation should be practiced and repeated